
**Overview**

During recent years, the Italian educational system has undergone various processes of reform; this contribution will take into particular consideration the period from 2003 to 2010, since the previous edition of *Balancing Freedom, Autonomy, and Accountability in Education*.

Although legislative policy constantly aims to streamline, some basic trends of educational policy are still unchanged: for example, when the so-called Moratti reform (named for Letizia Moratti, Minister of Education from June 2001 to May 2006) took place, it was in line with previous legislative and political debate.

The basic features of this reform were:

- stressing education as a national public service, but also including some private initiatives;
- improving the national system of vocational education;
- giving a consistent and wide national definition of the general provisions and
the essential levels of the right to education (including vocational education);

- defining the role played by Regions – even if it still marginal – assigning them the main duty to plan the network of educational services;

- supporting school autonomy and promoting best practices;

- favouring (at least at a formal level) the improvement of educational curricula based not only on the transmission of knowledge, but also aiming at the acquisition and verification of knowledge;

- increasing opportunities for networking between education and the world of work; and

- launching activities for evaluation of the national education system.

Despite the reform process, the Italian educational system had to face a decrease in the availability of resources, while forced to provide the same public educational services: as a consequence, for example, in many cases teaching staff with fixed-term contracts were employed in order to avoid long-term obligations when the government cuts public funding.

In addition, public funding cuts make it difficult to face another Italian historical problem: the maintenance of the pervasive State bureaucratic administration, which is an onerous task diverting resources from the improvement and widening of teaching programs.

On the other hand, some attention was paid to funding of private schools, granting the “right of choice” to families, including through school vouchers. National funding for private school choice amounted to 30 million euros in 2003/2004, 50 million euros in 2004/2005 and 30 million euros in 2005/2006, and several regions, including Lombardy, provided means-tested vouchers in the name of subsidiarity.¹

The debate of the last years regarded educational community as a whole: a failed attempt was made to reform school boards and to promote the involvement of students and their families, trying to hold all “school actors” responsible. This latter aspect is currently at an experimental stage.

In addition, the national administration dedicated attention to the prevention of bullying and to the diffusion of a culture of legality and respect for the rules (for example, in line with this approach, the teaching of “Citizenship and the Constitution” was introduced).
The structure of schooling

The education system includes:

a) Nursery school (three years): for children between three and five years of age, it is not compulsory and attendance depends on admission rank lists.

Primary education
Starting from six years of age, it is compulsory and includes:

b) primary school (five years)

c) lower secondary education (scuola secondaria di primo grado, three years)

At the end of primary education, students must pass a state exam to be admitted to secondary education.

Secondary education.
Starting from fourteen years of age:

d) upper secondary education (scuola secondaria di secondo grado, five years)

“liceo” six years (artistic, classical, scientific, music and dance, or human sciences)

Technical education, five years (commerce, tourism, and nine streams for industry)

Vocational state education: five years (services, industry and craftsmanship)

At the end of “liceo”, students have to take a State exam, whereby (if they pass it) they obtain a legally valid qualification.

The same applies to vocational schools, though at the end of the third year it is possible to obtain a degree to enter the world of work.

Compulsory schooling has been gradually extended from fourteen to fifteen and then to sixteen years of age, see art. 1, par 622 of law n. 296/2006).

The law provides also a requirement (originally until the pupil is sixteen years old), which might consist – alternatively – either in the attendance of the first two-year
period of the second level of education, or in the attendance of courses of vocational training, which could also be organised by private institutions and that could be recognised as equivalent. Thus there is an obligation to participate in education and training at least for twelve years or to the achievement of a qualification (even if it is a professional one), which could permit professional integration; the duty of school attendance ends in any case when the pupil is eighteen years old).

Even primary schooling was modified by the Gelmini reform, for example enabling enrolment of children in nursery schools at two-and-a-half, reintroducing one teacher per class (rather than two sharing a class) in primary schools, giving lower secondary schools the possibility to implement foreign language teaching, and extending grading on a decimal basis to primary and lower secondary school.

It should be noted that these reforms have been widely criticized as being possibly motivated by public funding cuts.

**The legal framework**

The Constitutional level

Today, a kind of “educational Constitution” is to be found in the Italian legal framework, as articles 33, 34 and 117 (which was amended in 2001) of the Constitution establish the very basic principles of education. These are:

- freedom of teaching;

- determination by the State of the “general provisions on education” (art. 117 Cost., lett. n), of the “basic levels of benefits” and of “the fundamental principles” of the educational system “to be guaranteed throughout the national territory” (art. 117 Cost., lett. m);

- “the Republic lays down general rules for education and establishes state schools of all branches and grades” (art. 33 Const.);

- freedom of establishing schools by “entities and private persons” other than public institutions, “at no cost to the State” (art. 33 Const.);

- the possibility of recognition of non-state schools established by institutions other than the State, (see art. 33 of the Constitution: “The law, when setting out the rights and obligations for the non-state schools which request parity,
shall ensure that these schools enjoy full liberty and offer their pupils an education and qualifications of the same standards as those afforded to pupils in state schools”;

- State examinations “are prescribed for admission to the various kinds and levels of schools as well as for graduation and for qualification to exercise a profession” (art. 33 Const.);

- the protection of the right to education, also considering that primary education is free-of-charge;

- the support provided for “capable and deserving pupils, including those lacking financial resources, [who] have the right to attain the highest levels of education” through “scholarships, allowances to families and other benefits, which shall be assigned through competitive examinations” (art. 34 Const.):

- the guarantee of school autonomy (though it is unclear what this means in practice, since headteachers cannot select their staff).

In fact, in Italy, more than in the United States and many other countries, the legal preconditions for real autonomy of public schools exists already, though that potential is very far from being fully realized for the benefit of the quality and professionalism of education. As Valli put it, “while demands for autonomy and flexibility are coming from across the country, the statist model responds with centralism and bureaucratic rigidity.” Resistance to any change in this centralized structure comes not only from the mental habits accrued over many decades of ‘nation-building’ directed from Rome, but also from the power of the highly-unionized corpo docente, which sees its interests protected by the present system. As in other countries, most teachers have preferred the security of being employees within a bureaucratic structure over the professional status and satisfactions of working within a context of vertical and horizontal subsidiarity.

The Constitutional framework of the right to education has been shaped by constitutional jurisprudence: since its first decisions, the Constitutional court framed a twofold social right, made up of the right to education and of the duty of education. A similar construction was adopted with regard to other social rights, like for example the right to health care. These social rights share some basic features: for example, both are “rights that cost” and both enjoy the constitutional protection of their fundamental core, which has to be guaranteed and implemented.

From this point of view, there is a strong constitutional protection of the right to education, which went to the point of “rewriting” some statutory provisions which did not
guarantee its basic core. In its decision n. 217 of 1987, the Constitutional court declared that a statutory provision was unconstitutional, as it did not fully guarantee the right to education of a disabled student, stating that integration had to be “facilitated”, instead of “guaranteed” (Constitutional court, decision n. 215/1987.3

Education promotes equality in another important decision of the Constitutional court, n. 80 of 2010, confirming that Parliament cannot infringe the basic core of this right, which limits its political discretion.

The importance of the fundamental right to education comes out even at the international level, which has important consequences from the point of view of the Italian legal system. Art. 117 of the Constitution, in fact, was amended in 2001, providing that the violation of a ratified treaty is an indirect infringement of the Constitution itself. Therefore, if a law infringes a ratified treaty, it will be deemed unconstitutional. For this reason, it is important to remember that the right to education is entrenched in many international documents: see for example the UN Universal declaration of human rights (1948, art. 26), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008, art. 24), and the First Protocol to the European convention of human rights (art. 2, stating that “No person shall be denied the right to education.”)

**The statutory level**

Minister of Education Letizia Moratti promoted a reform of the educational system, with law n. 53 of 28 March 2003. After the approval of this law, other provisions came into force, so that the legislative framework includes:

- legislative decree 19 February 2004, n. 59 (Definizione delle norme generali relative alla scuola dell’infanzia e al primo ciclo dell’istruzione) [Definition of general norms regarding preschool and the first level of school education];

- legislative decree 19 novembre 2004, n. 286 (Istituzione del Servizio nazionale di valutazione del sistema educativo di istruzione e di formazione, nonché riordino dell’omonimo istituto) [Institution of the National Service for Educational System Assessment];

- legislative decree 15 aprile 2005, n. 76 (Definizione delle norme generali sul diritto-dovere all’istruzione e alla formazione) [Definition of general rules for the right-duty to education and instruction];

- legislative decree 15 aprile 2005, n. 77 (Definizione delle norme generali
relative all’alternanza scuola-lavoro) [Definition of general rules regarding alternative periods of school and work];

- legislative decree 17 ottobre 2005, n. 226 (Norme generali e livelli essenziali delle prestazioni relativi al secondo ciclo del sistema educativo di istruzione e formazione) [General rules and essential levels of benefits regarding the second level of the educative and formative system].

There are also some other provisions to be considered:

- school autonomy regulation (art. 21 of law 15 March 1997, n. 59; decree of the President of the Republic 8 March 1999, n. 275);

- the rules on school parity (between private and public schools) and on right to study and to education. (law 10 March 2000, n. 62).

Another reform took place in 2008: art. 64 of the law of 6 August 2008, n. 133 directed the government to regulate the educational system as it resulted from the Moratti reform, aiming at a better reorganisation and streamlining. These same goals were pursued and reinforced by a subsequent law (30 October 2008, n. 169).

Some of the regulations of the government are now in force and provide for the rationalization of the educational system; reorganization of nursery and primary school; regulation of student evaluation; secondary schools; technical colleges; vocational schools; teacher’s qualification and training.

Even at a first glance, the role of the national government seems to be dominant, even if there is an open debate going on, particularly with regard to the extent of State jurisdiction over the educational system. It is worth pinpointing that the Constitutional court interpreted in a wide sense this jurisdiction “defending” State legislative choices on many occasions (see in particular decisions n. 279/2005 and 200/2009).

However it must also be noticed that the Constitutional court itself made clear the important role played by regions, for example with regard to local planning and determining the number of pupils and the number of teachers and other resources required. See for example Constitutional court, decisions n. 13/2004 and n. 200/2009.

In fact, although the constitutional reform which took place in 2001 was aimed at the empowerment of the Regions, in the field of education this goal has failed. There is intense discussion at present in Italy about such regionalization of government functions, stimulated by the fiscal crisis and by reports which appear almost daily in
the press, illustrating wide variations in the quality of management of services and budgets in different regions. These variations, of course, are a reminder that decentralizing functions is no remedy unless the region, province, or municipality which assumes the functions is organized to manage them efficiently and effectively and makes that a priority. While the Bassanini Law (1997) and the 2001 constitutional reform called for implementing legislation to decentralize some administrative functions and tasks to the regions and local authorities, including responsibility for schools, this has not occurred, apparently in part because of unwillingness on the part of some regions to take responsibility for the financial management and – perhaps even more – for absorbing hundreds of thousands of teachers and other school staff into regional government, with the associated risk of labor conflict.

In December 2006, the Conferenza Stato-Regioni developed a so-called ‘Masterplan’ for the transfer to the regions of administrative functions related to schools, together with the resources required to meet the various obligations devolved from the national government. With the change of government nationally, this was not implemented, but in October 2008 the president of the Conferenza delle Regioni reiterated their desire to implement the Masterplan. This desire has remained rather theoretical, however, since most of the regions have not yet developed the capacity to assume the wide range of responsibilities now exercised by the national government in the field of education. In addition, the Constitutional Court has adopted a restrictive interpretation of the legislative prerogatives of the regions.

In short, regional governments in Italy do not at present have authority over schools providing general instruction, despite the provisions of the Bassanini Law and Section V of the Constitution as amended in 2001. Their major scope for influencing general education is through non-State or independent schools, and it is in this respect that Lombardy has shown itself most creative in its implementation of policies on the basis of subsidiarity.

The educational system is partially regulated in a different way by the autonomous regions (Sicilia, Sardegna, Valle d’Aosta/Vallée d’Aoste, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, and the autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano).

For example, the autonomous province of Trento adopted a law in 2006 (law n. 5/2006) which, unlike at the national level, did not introduce curricular changes, choosing instead to provide for a slightly different and more detailed regulation of school autonomy (for example, every school in that province is required to adopt its articles of association).
Freedom to establish non-state schools

The Italian educational system traditionally includes private schools recognised by the State. During 2006/2007 school year, there were 12,532 “recognized schools”, constituting 21.67 percent of the overall schools in Italy; 7,116 of these were Catholic.

There is a constitutional guarantee (33,2) of the freedom to establish schools, but this is accompanied by a specific reservation that this cannot constitute an obligation of funding on the part of the State. The following sentence (33,3) balances protection of “full liberty” on the part of nonstate schools with protection of the right of their pupils to receive an education equivalent to that in state schools. This creates an obvious tension, though it is one which is present in every society that seeks to protect children while at the same time allowing independent civil society institutions (and, indeed, parents) to influence and care for them.

Schools may be established by the State (much the most common), by organizations (enti) such as a recognized religious organization or a local government, or by private parties. Ribolzi identifies six categories of non-state schools, to each of which different requirements and different possibilities of public recognition and public subsidy apply.4

In order to issue diplomas and certificates that are publicly recognized (and thus, for example, make it possible to enroll in a higher-level institution), a non-state school must conform its program closely to that of the state schools. This includes structures, programs, and qualifications of staff; in most cases it also includes staff salaries.

From the point of view of the freedom to establish non-state schools, other than Catholic ones, there are non-denominational private schools such as culturally motivated schools (Steiner schools or Montessori schools) or for-profit schools (e.g. language schools); but currently there are no recognized Islamic schools (in 2005, an attempt to establish an Islamic school in Milan failed, as the school was closed for security reasons and no similar attempts followed).

According to the legal framework (see law n. 62/2000 and also art. 1-bis of law 3 February 2006, n. 27 and ministry decree 29 November 2007, n. 267), a private school may be recognized by the State, becoming part of the National educational system, like public schools.

In order to get state accreditation, schools must respect some principles:

- the educational project must be in harmony with Constitutional principles
and with legal requirements concerning curricular programs;

- schools must ensure suitable spaces and structures, according to the law;
- a representative school board must be established;
- every student who meets qualification and age requirements must be allowed to attend the school, subject to space limitations;
- compliance with the law on disabilities;
- the whole educational project must be coherent (it is not possible to ask for recognition of a single class);
- the teaching staff must meet State qualification requirements;
- the employment contracts must comply with National collective agreements.

‘Recognized’ private preprimary and primary schools receive lump sums from the State for each class, independent of the number of pupils). Secondary schools receive public funds for special needs students. This public funding has been criticized, considering that art. 33 par. 3 of the Constitution states: (“Entities and private persons have the right to establish schools and institutions of education, at no cost to the State”).

Nevertheless, on the one hand regional funding is not excluded by constitutional provision and, on the other hand, if these schools were to be considered as part of the national educational system, public funding might be expected.

Some private schools do not ask for State recognition, and in consequence are not able to award legally recognized diplomas. Such schools are to be registered by regional authorities (see ministry decree 29 November 2007, n. 263), in order to guarantee some basic requirements, for example with regard to school structures or to educational projects, which must comply with the Constitution.

**Homeschooling**

Parents are allowed to educate their children at home (educazione paterna), under state supervision and with the approval of the principal of the local school. The State reserves the right to verify the level of competence reached by means of examination.
School choice not limited by family income

The right to education comes under State and regional jurisdiction: regions traditionally have been playing an important role, giving special attention to the support for deserving pupils, including those lacking financial resources, to attend schools chosen by their families. According to regional regulation, grants are income-based as well as merit-based: it follows that the family’s financial situation plays a decisive role.

In addition, in many cases the right to school choice has been assured at State as well at regional level, basically with regard to officially recognized private schools (“scuole paritarie”). School vouchers of different amounts have been implemented and it might be inferred that they are a kind of “indirect funding” of recognized private schools (all the same might be said of families’ “cost reimbursement”). To take one notable example, Lombardy has, over the past decade, sought to influence the provision of schooling in the region through a variety of measures, including various forms of grants or vouchers, recently brought together under the system of *Dote* which have greatly simplified administration and participation. Consistent with the principles of the centrality of the person, and of subsidiarity, payments are made directly into the accounts of those eligible (by income criteria, in most cases, but also in some cases by handicap or by academic merit) before the start of the school year, thus enabling them to function with full dignity as clients choosing which services to select.⁶

Similar grants of economic aid are aimed at sustaining students belonging to specific groups as, for example, disabled students or linguistic minorities.

School distinctiveness protected by law and policy

School autonomy has been widely recognised and improved by the 1997, 1998, and 1999 reforms, especially through the implementation of pedagogical ‘best practices’ in schools to reduce the need for external supervision. Nevertheless, there have been no substantial changes of these laws, with the important exception of the 2001 constitutional amendment, explicitly referring to school autonomy (see art. 117).

These are the basic features of school autonomy:

- its *raison d’être* is directly linked to the constitutional protection of freedom of teaching and cultural pluralism;

- teaching autonomy: school staff contribute to develop school educational programs, within the purposes generally established by the law;
• school autonomy includes the organizational, financial, research, experimentation and development levels;

• flexibility with regard to the school year and some curricular activities: the school must provide a certain number of hours of instruction per year and at least five days per week; 20 percent of curricular activities are flexible;

• secondary schools may contribute to assessing final exams (one of the three examination proofs are designed and assessed by the school);

• schools may reach educational agreements with private or public institutions or with other schools, to reach their educational goals through networking.

There is a common consent that school autonomy is based on a polycentric approach both from the organizational as well as the administration point of view: as the Constitutional court stated in its n. 13/2004 decision, every school contributes to the definition of the right to education, framing general laws and the basic level of benefits both at State and regional level.

Nevertheless, there is a certain amount of criticism about the real implementation of this legislative framework, as various factors must be further taken into consideration:

• gradual but progressive public funding cuts hinder, with no doubt, improvement and effectiveness of school autonomy;

• there have been no attempts of renewal of school boards, slowing down school autonomy, since it is deeply affected by decision-making processes;

• the role played by the headmaster is still unclear, since it is under the national education authority, enjoying a kind of hybrid nature if compared to other managers in public administration;

• there continues to be a pervasive coverage of State administration even at local level, regulating and controlling schools;

• the legal framework is still under reform and rather complicated, since the education minister has issued different circulars and other administrative acts.
**Decisions about admitting pupils**

‘Recognized’ private schools have a certain degree of autonomy concerning admission of pupils, which is subject to the pupil or the family’s commitment to the educational project of the school.

**Decisions about staff**

‘Recognized’ private schools have a certain degree of flexibility with respect to personnel management: it is possible to require that teaching staff exhibit consistency with the educational mission of the school. According to judicial interpretation, in fact, recognized schools are to be considered as “ideological organizations”, meaning that dismissal of personnel is possible when there is an incompatibility with behavioural and ethical requirements of the school, as illustrated by the famous *Cordero* case, Constitutional court decision n. 195/1972.

**Accountability for school quality**

A specific research agency, INVALSI (*Istituto Nazionale per la Valutazione del Sistema Educativo di Istruzione e Formazione*) provides for school quality measurement (see legislative decree 20 luglio 1999, n. 258). After the reforms of the last two years, this body started working with these specific tasks:

- periodical and systematic evaluation of student knowledge and skills and on the comprehensive quality of the formative possibilities provided by schools and vocational institutions, taking also into account continuing education;

- Management of the National system of evaluation (*Sistema Nazionale di Valutazione*);

- studying and understanding the causes of non-completion of schooling, with particular regard to social analysis and educational aims;

- gathering the necessary data for the assessment of the added value realised by school education;

- preparing national written exams to verify learning levels after the third year
in lower secondary education (starting from 2010/2011 school year);

- providing models for final exams to secondary schools;

- evaluating the learning levels of students at the end of secondary school, according to national standards;

- supporting school administrators, regions, local schools, and other educational institutions in monitoring, evaluating and self-evaluating their training courses;

- training teachers and administrators in evaluating and self-evaluating educational institutions;

- conducting research activities at the request of public and private institutions;

- ensuring Italian participation in European and International research projects regarding learning evaluation, representing Italy in the relevant institutions; and

- elaborating evaluation procedures for headmasters.

**Teaching of values**

The approach of the national educational system to cultural and religious diversity depends to a great extent on the role assigned to Catholic religious teaching.

Every public school must provide for Catholic religious education, as stated by law 25 March 1985, n. 121 ratifying the agreements between Italy and the Holy See (amending the previous agreement of 11 February 1929, “patti lateranensi” concluded under the fascist regime).

According to art. 30 of this 1984 agreement, public schools must provide for Catholic religious education, both in primary as well as in secondary schools (in fact, this article refers to “all public schools, with the exception of Universities”). Although Catholic religious education must be provided for by law, students can choose if they want to attend or not this teaching “without any discrimination”. The Constitutional court, in two well-known decisions (n. 203/1989 e n. 13/1991), made clear that non-attending students are not required to attend another course, due to the protection of religious freedom by art. 19 of the Constitution.
While the Constitutional court made clear that schools cannot impose the attendance of an alternative teaching, the possibility that students require an alternative teaching is still under discussion. For example, a recent decision of the administrative Court Consiglio di Stato (n. 2749/2010) stated that schools must provide for teaching alternative to religion teaching, although students cannot be compelled to attend them. That same year, a tribunal ordered the State administration to indemnify 1,500 € in favour of parents whose child had not been offered the opportunity to attend any alternative teaching (see Tribunal of Padova, decision of 30 July 2010).

Religious groups, other than those ones belonging to the Catholic Church, can stipulate their own agreements with the State, which are called intese, and which are ratified by law. The concluded agreements foresee that students, their families, or the educational bodies can ask for their own religious education hours by members of their groups, as a part of “cultural activities”, provided that they will bear the costs. (see art 11 of the law n.520/1995, on the agreement with the Lutheran Church in Italy; art. 9 of the law n. 116/1995, on the agreement with the Baptist Christian Union; art. 12 of the law n. 516/1988, on the agreement with the Union of Italian Adventist Churches; art. 9 of the law n. 517/1988 on the agreement with the Assembly of the Church of God in Italy; art. 11 of the law n . 101/1989, on the agreement with the Union of Italian Jewish communities).

It is important to underline the quasi-constitutional status of the agreement between the Italian State and the Catholic Church, as the Constitutional court stated in some leading cases (see decisions n. 30/1971 e n. 18/1982). As this agreement is clearly mentioned by art. 7 of the Constitution (stating that “The State and the Catholic Church are independent and sovereign, each within its own sphere. Their relations are regulated by the Lateran pacts. Amendments to such Pacts which are accepted by both parties shall not require the procedure of constitutional amendment”) it follows that the law ratifying it enjoys a special status: for example, it may infringe the Constitution, except for the very basic principles of the legal system.

This legal framework affects not only religious education, but also the regulation of religious symbols. For example, art. 118 of royal decree 30 April 1924, n. 965, states that every school must display the National flag, the crucifix and the portrait of the King (in 1924 Italy was still a monarchy); similarly, according to art. 119 of royal decree of 26 April 1928, n. 1297, the crucifix is listed in the classroom furnishing. These two provisions have been considered still in force, for example by a decision of the supreme administrative court Consiglio di Stato (n. 63/1988).

Another well-known decision of the Consiglio di Stato (n. 556/ 2006 but see also decision n. 56/2004 of Veneto administrative tribunal), held that displaying a crucifix in public schools did not infringe the basic principle of laïcité. According to this Court,
in fact, the crucifix is to be considered as a cultural symbol, an expression of the very basic principle of the Italian republic, like equality and solidarity, which are explicitly mentioned by articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution. This argument has been widely criticized, both in academic circles as well as in some other judicial decisions (see for example Tribunal of L’Aquila, 23 October 2003).

In 2009 the European Court of Human Rights ruled that displaying the crucifix in Italian public schools was an infringement of art. 2 Protocol 1 and art. 9 of the European Convention of Human Rights (see case Lautsi c. Italia, n. 30.814/06). The case is still pending on behalf the Grande Chambre of the Court, therefore the final decision is yet to be delivered. Last week decided in favour of Crucifix.

The displaying of symbols of other religions is not regulated, therefore different solutions are proposed: ranging from the “white wall” to a shared space with the possibility of displaying different symbols. Various regulatory approaches have been proposed as well, relying on every school autonomy, or on national law, providing for the possibility of displaying the crucifix only for historical and cultural reasons.

In any case, “personal” or individual display of religious symbols is not explicitly regulated, being constitutionally protected as an expression of religious freedom. Moreover, the law does not provide for dress codes at school, which is to be regulated on a case-by-case approach. For these reasons, every person can wear his or her own religious symbols at school.

The attempt of some mayors to ban the burqua and/or the chador failed, being considered illegitimate and exceeding their competence by some administrative courts (TAR Friuli-Venezia Giulia, n. 645/2006). Nevertheless, in some case (especially after the ECTHR decision) some mayors ordered the displaying of crucifix (which is a power conferred by art. 54 of legislative decree of 18 August 2000, n. 267, amended by law n. 125/2008).

Since school year 2010/2011, the teaching of “citizenship and the Constitution” has been introduced from nursery schools to upper secondary education (see law n. 169/2008). Some regional projects had already involved local associations and organisations to support this teaching during school year 2009/2010.

According to the national administration, “Citizenship and the Constitution” was not intended to be a simple renewal of the previous teaching of “educazione civica”, but was aimed at spreading a culture of legality and engaged citizenship, claiming the importance of such basic values as freedom, justice and respect for the human being, which are rooted in the Italian Constitution.
Endnotes

1 see Glenn


3 www.giurcost.it.


5 Ribolzi 1987, 134.

6 Regione Lombardia, 19.
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NOTE: The english version of the Italian Constitution is to be found at [http://www.quirinale.it/qrnw/statico/costituzione/pdf/costituzione_inglese_01.pdf](http://www.quirinale.it/qrnw/statico/costituzione/pdf/costituzione_inglese_01.pdf)